

Chemical Bank Benefits by the Competition

Initiative in Brief

Chemical Bank employees are no strangers to competition. So when the Northern Division of Chemical Bank was asked by District Health Department #10 to join other businesses and implement a worksite wellness program they accepted the challenge. About 40 employees from all four branch offices began with the *Let's Get Moving* healthy lifestyle challenge.

When the *Let's Get Moving* challenge was over, the employees designed their own competition which involved numerous ways to get physical activity: walking, running, skiing, jogging, gardening, etc. "There was some competitiveness. People were proud of what they were doing, and some people had significant weight loss. They could see improved foods that were being served at meetings and gatherings," said Doug Brown, Vice President of the Cadillac Chemical Bank branch.

Chemical Bank also implemented a no smoking policy among all branches in the Northern Division; smoking is not allowed anywhere on the property, not even in the parking lot. "As we hear more about health care, I think eventually you will see large corporations getting involved in healthy initiatives because healthy employees can be better employees," said Brown.

Chemical Bank was in the middle of a re-organization at the time the wellness committee was being formed, which presented some challenges in getting people to serve on the wellness committee and maintain their enthusiasm. Despite these challenges they were able to keep the initiative going and plan to re-energize in the fall. Brown plans to present results to top management to get them more involved in wellness initiatives.

Benefit

Noted benefits of the program are:

- Competition provided a break from the usual sales competition.
- Increased self-image for employees.
- Implemented a no smoking policy.

"We're in a sales environment and it gave us a chance to get involved in a non-sales type of program. It also gave some employees a good feeling about themselves; you could see that in their work."

Doug Brown
Chemical Bank

Lessons Learned

- The wellness committee should include hourly as well as salaried employees.
- A large wellness committee helps maintain the enthusiasm.
- It is essential to engage top management support.

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Cost: Approximately \$1,000 for pedometers and incentive gifts
Risk Factor: Physical inactivity, overweight, smoking
Impact/Reach: 40 people
Business/Sector: Banking/financial